

**Board of Forestry and Fire Protection
Range Management Advisory Committee (RMAC)**

**Minutes
May 29, 2008**

Attending:

RMAC:

Representing

Ken Zimmerman	California Cattlemen's Association
Mike Connor	Public Member
Clancy Dutra	California Farm Bureau Federation
J.R McCollister	Public Member
Edwin Anchordoguy	California Wool Growers Association
Scott Carnegie	California Forestry Association
Leonard Hale	Watershed Fire Council of Southern California
Mel Thompson	California Wool Growers Association
Jeff Stephens	CAL FIRE / RMAC Executive Secretary

Members of the Public:

Larry Ford	Consultant
Ann Yost	US Forest Service
Eric Huff	Board of Forestry & Fire Protection
Ron Eng	CDFA
Tacy Currey	California Association of Resource Conservation Districts

Items 1 & 2 Call to Order and Introductions:

Ken Zimmerman called the meeting to order at 8:00 am. Introductions of all present were made.

Item 3, Review of the March 2008 Minutes:

The minutes were reviewed and edits noted by Jeff Stephens. Mike Connor moved to accept the minutes as presented with corrections. Leonard Hale seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Item 6, Draft Board Policy Number 12: Continued Discussion on Content with Certification Panel Representatives for Certified Rangeland Managers:

Mike Connor provided a summary of the May 28th meeting of the Rangeland Focus Group addressing Certified Rangeland Managers. He stated that RMAC is in disagreement with the Certification Panel edits of Draft Board Policy 12. As explained by Mike Connor the disagreement stems from RMAC's review of the California Code of Regulations (CCR) and Public resources Code (PRC) stating that language which implies requirements for the use of a CRM (Certified Rangeland Manager) is not supported in the code. The edits as a whole removed nearly all changes recommended by the Certification Panel.

Larry Ford stated that the Panels purpose in making the edits are to strengthen and clarify the Board's statements concerning where and when a CRM is required, and countered that in the Panel's opinion there are requirements for the use of a CRM within the Code.

Ideas put forth in discussion included forming a subcommittee of RMAC and Panel members to resolve the differences noted regarding the requirements for a CRM. Also proposed was to obtain a legal opinion form the Attorney General or the Board's Staff Attorney.

Ken Zimmerman referenced a letter written in the 1990s by then Executive Officer Chris Rowney stating that the Board has made no specific provisions for the use of a CRM. He cautioned RMAC to not adopt recommended policy that is in conflict with existing Board policy. Clancy Dutra stated that in his opinion the edits proposed by the Panel do conflict with CCR 1651, and that RMAC should not propose changes that are in conflict with the CCR.

Larry Ford noted that it would not appear that RMAC is in favor of any use of the word "required" in reference to the use of a CRM. RMAC members clarified that it would require legislation that changes the law in order to support wording that requires a CRM. Larry Ford stated that he would support obtaining a legal interpretation of the current law.

There was further discussion on the part of RMAC members (Ken Zimmerman, Mike Connor, Leonard Hale, et.al.) stating that RMAC is not in a position to lobby for legislation that changes the CRM law, nor can RMAC take a position that is contrary to the organizations RMAC represents.

J.R. McCollister asked of Larry Ford to state the basis for the Panel's position that a CRM may be required under some circumstances. Larry Ford stated that when AB 1903 was enacted which allowed for designated specialties under the Foresters Licensing Law that this created a requirement similar to that of a Registered Professional Forester.

RMAC in cooperation with Larry Ford decided that the appropriate course would be for the Panel members to meet with Eric Huff and explain their position regarding requirements for the use of a CRM. If Mr. Huff is in disagreement then the advice of legal council should be sought.

Larry Ford stated that he sees two issues that are in need of discussion. One is the issue of whether the law allows for requiring a CRM under specific circumstances; the other is better defining the landscape where a CRM is required, which is reflected in the edits proposed by the Panel that mentions overlapping landscapes that require the services of a CRM.

Mike Connor agreed to appear at the July meeting involving the Panel and Eric Huff to discuss the outcome of the May RMAC meeting. Ken Zimmerman volunteered to call in if a conference line were made available. Discussion closed.

Mike Connor asked Larry Ford to comment on other activities of the Panel. One is the Continuing Education credits (CEU) for CRMs. Larry Ford invited RMAC to comment on test questions that are being housed in a database.

Item 4. Agency and Association Reports:

California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (CARCD), Tacy Currey Reporting:

Karen Buhr (intern) is already beginning work on the RMAC paper for Integrating Resource Management with Resource Investments. An Office Live File is being set up so that RMAC may review progress. Information on easement properties is being accumulated. CARCD during the course of research has located endowments that managing agencies were not aware of that are tied to specific properties.

The CARCD has been conducting tours for public and environmental groups to demonstrate ranchland management practices.

CARCD is coordinating the National GLCI Conference in Reno for December of this year. They are close to releasing a call for presenters and speakers. Attendance has been growing in recent years. They expect an estimated 1,200 participants this year.

CARCD is working with USFWS on sage grouse. The effort is to determine the current level of the species to form the baseline for future "take" analysis using the Safe Harbor procedure.

California Department of Food & Agriculture (CDFA), Ron Eng Reporting:

Ron Eng reported on the January 2008 RMAC letter addressed to CDFA. This letter sought CDFA support for encouraging the various Weed Management Areas within the state to investigate whether local cooperators have mitigation measures in place to prevent the spread of noxious weeds from the movement of equipment. Ron Eng spoke with Terrance Lorick prior to the RMAC meeting. Mr. Lorick indicated in that discussion that no agency has specific procedures in place that addresses the issue of equipment cleaning. It is common policy among agencies to clean equipment. However, Mr. Eng stated that the spread of weeds by equipment is small in comparison to other sources; building products being a prime example.

Ron Eng passed out two documents; "Prevention and Best Management Practices Resources Cal-IPC Symposium Working Group, September 21, 2007", and "Prevention of Weed Spread on Site-Disturbing Projects". He stated that the biggest problem in weed movement is rail traffic. He made the point that there are no existing laws other than agriculture that prevents the spread of weeds from equipment.

Ron Eng referred RMAC to the California Invasive Weeds Council (CIVC) for additional information and contacts.

Scott Carnegie referred to the statement by Ron Eng that agencies have a common practice of washing equipment, and asked if agencies have a policy that addresses equipment cleaning for noxious weeds. Ron Eng stated that some do and cited the USFS which may require contractors to clean. Ann Yost stated that this is a standard clause in USFS timber harvesting contracts.

USDA Forest Service, Ann Yost Reporting:

Ann Yost introduced herself as the newly appointed Rangeland Manager for Region 5. The biggest issue that will be of interest to RMAC is the law suit filed by the Western

Watershed Project and eight other environmental groups challenging 46 grazing allotments approved under categorical exclusion in Region 5. The plaintiffs have made several claims one of which is that the allotments should have been appealable per the Repeal Reform Act. The California Cattlemen's Association (CCA) is intervening on behalf of the permittees whether they are members of CCA or not. The USFS intends to take the case as far as the US Supreme Court if needed. Another suit dealing with grazing allotments was filed in Idaho recently using similar claims by the plaintiffs (Western Watershed Project).

Ann Yost explained that the net effect of the law suites has not resulted in injunctions of any of the allotments and the permits are going forward presently. The main challenge is the categorical exclusion process as a means of streamlining the NEPA process, and the fact that a categorical exclusion does not receive the same level of review and public comment as a under the full NEPA process.

Ann Yost shared her experience on the National Forest looking at vectors for the spread of noxious weeds. Her work revealed that roads and watercourses were the number one areas of spread, whether due to transport by vehicles or the fact that roads offer disturbed areas for invasive plants to become established. She did not consider spread due to livestock use to be a significant problem.

Item 5, Draft Paper, *Integrating Natural Resource Management in California with Resource Conservation Investments*:

Ken Zimmerman stated that the paper's outline developed by Mel Thompson and Ed Anchordoguy was reviewed and edited during the Policy Focus Group meeting on May 28th. Agreement was reached to convert the conclusions portion into recommendations. Item 1 will include the problem statement.

Ken Zimmerman stated that Tacy Currey has offered time and work by an intern (Karen Buhr) employed by CARCD to work on the draft and reference materials identified to date, and craft a new document based on the outline and draft paper currently available. Ken Zimmerman will be the contact person for Ms Buhr. He will review the original paper and insert portions into the Mel Thompson outline with assistance from Karen Buhr. Ken Zimmerman also asked that any other reference materials be forwarded to Ms Buhr, such as the previous work by the Little Hoover Commission noted by Mel Thompson.

Ken Zimmerman asked that both good and poor examples of state managed lands be cited in the paper, and that more than one example be included to avoid focusing on just one agency.

Regarding a statewide strategic plan: Ken Zimmerman stated that he does not believe RMAC will be developing the plan with this paper; rather introducing the concept that a plan is needed.

Tacy Currey asked that all RMAC members send any reference items to her immediately so that Ms Buhr may begin reviewing and listing on the website.

Ken Zimmerman stated that the Board has asked to review the RMAC paper at the July meeting. He believes this will be more of a progress report rather than a finished product.

In regards to citing success stories, Mel Thompson made the point that he favors separating out and mentioning specifically the elements that makes a project successful. For example, in the case of the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, fiscal management of the project by the RCD is an element that makes for success.

Item 7, Focus Group Reports:

Rangeland Focus Group Report, Mike Connor Reporting:

The Focus Group met yesterday and discussed the results of Certification Panel edits. (See item 6 of these minutes for comments)

Tracy Schohr with Cattlemen's Association introduced the idea of reviving the poster which illustrates how livestock can be used to reduce fuel hazards by controlling vegetation. The Focus Group agreed that reviving this effort with CAL FIRE is a worthwhile undertaking, but that it should reflect targeting grazing with all livestock including other herbivores. Jeff Stephens will contact Bruce Turberville with the Fire Safe Council and Ken Zimmerman will contact Frank Stewart to determine if any possible funding may be available for a campaign to support public outreach and inform landowners of the value of targeted grazing.

Tracy Schohr also asked if it were possible to inform CAL FIRE suppression personnel of the value that residual dry matter has to ranchers, and also the value that ranchers can provide to suppression efforts through knowledge of the local landscape, etc. Specifically, she is looking for time at the Fire Academy to present a training module on ranch values. Jeff Stephens will speak with a few key individuals and invite them to the next RMAC meeting.

Mike Connor turned the discussion to the RMAC letter addressed to CDFA requesting help with the issue of cleaning equipment to mitigate the spread of noxious weeds. This letter asked that CDFA contact the various Weed Management Areas and inquire as to the current policies in place by local agencies/cooperators for cleaning equipment. RMAC did not view the response from CDFA as supportive of this request, since in CDFA's view equipment is a minor vector as compared to other sources. Tacy Currey who sits on the Oversight Committee for the Weed Management Areas volunteered to contact the Committee and investigate the level of support within the WMAs for responding to RMAC's request. She will also send out a general inquiry to all the WMAs asking if they have information on policies for equipment cleaning in their respective areas, and she will contact Terrance Lorick with CDFA.

Mike Connor stated that he will contact Richard Harris with the UC Cooperative Extension determine if any further comment or action on the part of RMAC is needed regarding the Placer County Oak Management Guidelines.

Water Focus Group, Clancy Dutra Reporting:

Clancy Dutra reported that Jeff Stephens attended the meeting of RCDs at the Santa Margarita Ranch. He stated that probably the most significant information learned at this meeting is that a Water Quality Management Plan developed under Tier 1 is still a viable option for ranchers within the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Board area.

Clancy Dutra stated that a primary objective of Water Focus Group is to establish a purpose and a set of goals for the Water Group. Projects as part of the Focus Group goals that were discussed are:

1. Persuade the industry to reengage with the California Water Quality Management Plan process. He recommended gathering information that examines the extent to which it is being used; determine how many acres under management, need for revisions, etc.
2. Obtain assistance from UC Cooperative Extension to establish standards for assessment that the various regulating Boards could use to set regulations that are meaningful/attainable.

The next water meeting will have on the agenda items for establishing purpose and goals.

Clancy Dutra suggested that RMAC return to the process of submitting a report to the Board that sets goals for the coming year and work completed in the prior year for each of the Focus Groups.

Vegetation Management/Fire Focus Group, J.R. McCollister Reporting:

J.R. McCollister stated that he attended the April Resource Protection Committee (RPC) meeting that was also attended by the State Fire Marshal and the CAL FIRE Director. The Director reported a desire to fully integrate the State Fire Marshals office with CAL FIRE. A reorganization effort is underway to accomplish this. One comment of note by the Director when asked what the Board can do to assist CAL FIRE with development of the Fire Plan the Director stated that basically the Board is the lead on developing the plan and it is more a case of the Board how the Department may provide assistance to the Board.

Item 8. Consideration of Current RMAC Officers:

Ken Zimmerman stated that he is now the chairman of the National Invasive Species Advisory Committee, and that his time for this RMAC may be impacted, and that RMAC may wish to select a new chair given the time constraints. Mike Connor argued against this action and moved that Ken Zimmerman be submitted for vote before RMAC to continue as Chairman. J.R. McCollister seconded the motion. Discussion: Mel Thompson commented that all Focus Groups have been chaired by the same persons for the past 8 years. He recommended a process be put in place that describes the term of service and a method for transition when a change in leadership is needed. Clancy Dutra clarified that in the case of the Water Focus Group transition had occurred between himself and HG during the period quoted by Mel Thompson.

Ed Anchordoguy asked for clarification on terms for membership and that of the Focus Groups. Jeff Stephens stated that terms as appointed by the Board are 4 years. Leonard Hale stated that terms for the Focus Group Chairman are annually. Ken Zimmerman stated that Focus Group Chairs are appointed by the RMAC Chairman based on knowledge of the subject area; however, he is open to any change to the procedure for selecting Group Chairman. Mel Thompson stated that he is not advocating a change but establishing a formal means of transition. Mike Connor and Mel Thompson noted that several RMAC members are not contemplating being on RMAC for the long term. Scott Carnegie noted that in his experience with other organizations the same issue arose. As a

result very specific guidelines were developed so that all members understand when the opportunity of transition occurs. Mel Thompson stated that having the opportunity for transition of leadership is important to retaining Committee members that have an interest in serving in a leadership capacity.

Clancy Dutra reviewed the previous structure of the RMAC Focus Group. Originally the Groups were composed of up to 3 members that met separately on specific topics. The Chair of the Group would then report to the Full RMAC. Later this changed to allow any RMAC member to attend a Focus Group meeting; however, only the Focus Group committee members had a vote. Currently any member of RMAC may attend a Focus Group and voting on issues is normally deferred to the Full RMAC meeting.

Ken Zimmerman stated that he views the comment by Mel Thompson and others in a positive light and called for recommendations. He asked that Mel Thompson and others prepare recommendations to this end. Scott Carnegie stated that just restating in writing the process for transition of leadership would be very helpful to the newer members. Mel Thompson noted the eminent turnover among members and the Board's Policy statement of 2007, citing these items as the need to provide for methods of transition to deal with rangeland issues in the future. Ken Zimmerman stated that the Boards 2007 Policy document needs to be placed on the agenda for a careful review by RMAC.

Motion to elect Ken Zimmerman as Chairman carried by unanimous vote.

Leonard Hale made a motion that Mike Connor continue as the Vice Chairmen of RMAC. Clancy Dutra seconded the motion. Discussion: Mike Connor stated that he is willing to serve but that given the comments by Mel Thompson he believes that the issue of transition should be placed on the agenda for later discussion and if as a result of that discussion it is best that he step aside he will do so.

Motion to elect Mike Connor as Vice Chair passed by unanimous vote.

Item 9, New and Unfinished Business:

None

Item 10, Public Comment:

None